

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 5-9, 23, and 27 are pending, and Claims 1, 6, 23, and 27 are amended. Support for the amendments is found in the originally filed application such as on page 32, lines 16-25. Therefore, no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action the drawings are objected to; Claims 1-3, 5-9, 23, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph; Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph; and Claims 1-3, 5-9, 23, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,052,211 to Nakajima in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,450,119 to Hinton et al. (hereinafter “Hinton”).

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the courtesy of an interview between the Examiner and Applicants’ representatives conducted on November 27, 2006. During the interview, the Examiner and Applicants’ representatives discussed the § 112 and §103(a) rejections in the outstanding Office Action and proposed claim amendments similar to those presented herein. Arguments presented during the interview are reiterated below.

In reply to the objection to the drawings, the claim term “arranged in different layouts” is canceled from the claims. No new matter has been added. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, First Paragraph

The outstanding Office Action rejects Claims 1, 6, 23, and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph for failing to disclose scanning lenses “arranged in different layouts.” In reply to the rejection, the claim term “arranged in different layouts” is canceled from the claims, as discussed during the interview.

The outstanding Office Action rejects Claims 6 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph for failing to disclose how scanning lenses can be “arranged in different layouts” and “rotated about an optical axis by 180 degrees oppositely from each other.” In reply to the rejection, the claim term “arranged in different layouts” is canceled from the claims and the claim term “rotated about an optical axis by 180 degrees” has been discussed and clarified during the interview.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1, 6, 23, and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph be withdrawn.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

The outstanding Office Action rejects Claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. In reply to the rejection, the claimed feature of scanning lenses having “a same shape as each other” was clarified during the interview, and Claim 6 has been amended to more clearly recite that feature. Support for the amendment can be found in non-limiting embodiments described on page 32, lines 16-25. Thus, no new matter has been added. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The outstanding Office Action rejects Claims 1-3, 5-9, 23, and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Nakajima in view of Hinton.

Claim 1 is amended to recite first and second scanning lenses that “are proximate to the target surfaces and are configured to guide the corresponding beams to different target surfaces, each scanning lens of the first and second scanning lens has a shape that asymmetrically varies along a line perpendicular to a corresponding optical axis, and the line of the first scanning lens is oriented at an angle different from the line of the second scanning

lens relative to the corresponding optical axis.” Support for the amendment can be found in non-limiting embodiments described on page 32, lines 16-25. Thus, no new matter is added.

Turning to the applied art, Nakajima describes an optical scanning system that emits light beams 1-4 to a rotatable polygon mirror 15.¹ The light beams 1 through 4 are redirected through corresponding mirrors 22-27 and adjusted by toroidal lenses to a respective image forming surface.² For example, light beam 1 is reflected by a set of mirrors and adjusted by toroidal lens 18 onto image surface 28,³ and light beam 2 is reflected by a set of mirrors and adjusted by toroidal lens 19 onto image surface 29.⁴ Nakajima is silent about the toroidal lenses 18 and 19 being different.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that toroidal lenses 18 and 19 of Nakajima do not correspond to claimed first and second scanning lens each having *a shape that asymmetrically varies along a line perpendicular to a corresponding optical axis*.

Additionally, Nakajima neither discloses nor suggests that the line of toroidal lens 18 is oriented at an angle different from the line of toroidal lens 19 relative the corresponding optical axis, and vice versa.

Further, the outstanding Office Action recognizes in the paragraph covering pages 7 and 8 that “Nakajima does not disclose a coupling optical system.” To cure this deficiency, the outstanding Office Action relies on Hinton. However, Hinton does not cure the deficiencies of Nakajima discussed above.

Therefore, Claim 1 is distinguishable over Nakajima in view of Hinton as the applied references fail to disclose (1) first and second scanning lenses each having *a shape that asymmetrically varies along a line perpendicular to a corresponding optical axis*, and (2) the

¹ See Nakajima, column 4, lines 55-57.

² See Nakajima, column 5, lines 44-47.

³ See Nakajima, column 5, lines 54-55 and Figure 4.

⁴ See Nakajima, column 5, lines 52-54 and Figure 4.

line of the first scanning lens oriented at an angle different from the line of the second scanning lens relative to the corresponding optical axis.

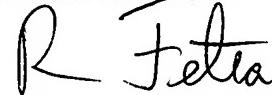
Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claim 1, and the claims depending therefrom, under 35 U.S.C. §103 be withdrawn.

As independent Claims 23 and 27 disclose features analogous to Claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 23 and 27 are at least patentable for the reasons stated for the patentability of Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 23 and 27, and the claims depending therefrom, under 35 U.S.C. §103 be withdrawn.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the foregoing comments, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention patentably distinguishes over the applied references. The present application is therefore believed to be in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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